(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The matter is under consideration.

(c) Does not arise.

Rent-Free connections by BSNL

312. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether BSNL has made all the landline connections rent-free;

(b) if so, since when;

(c) whether the same facility is proposed to be provided by MTNL in Delhi and Mumbai: and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) and (d) MTNL Delhi has introduced 1+1 scheme under which a subscriber having MTNL landline connection for more than six months, can have one rent-free second landline telephone connection for three yeas. There is no proposal to introduce this scheme in Mumbai.

Nuns as Lawyers

314. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Karnataka High Court has ordered that Nuns canndt be lawyers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Nuns are eligible to acquire a degree in law;

(d) if so, the reasons for denying them the right to make use to their qualifications; and

(e) the steps Government propose in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) No Sir,

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Advocates Act-1961 does not bar Nuns to take degree in Law.

(d) Hon'ble High Court of Kerala in Fr. Thomas Pudussery *V.* Bar Council of Kerala [2005(4) KLT 745] has pronounced that Priests and Nuns are eligible to be enrolled as Advocates provided they are not in full time employment/engagement under the church or the institutions under it.

(e) Does not arise.

Inclusion of "Autism" under Disability Act

†316 . SHRI VASANT CHAVAN: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the persons suffering from mental disorders such as "Autism" have not been included in the 'Persons with Disability' Act;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if not, the relevant clauses of the Act in which this disease has been included alongwith the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) to (c) Persons with Autism are included in the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, under the category "Mental Retardation" which has been defined under Section 2(r). Benefits under the Act are available of disability for persons on the basis of certificate issued in terms of guidelines for assessment of disability for persons with mental retardation. In addition, the National Trust for Welfare of person with Autism, Cerebral, Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities has

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.